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Richardson - Brief remarks - 1837

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**BRIEF REMARKS**  
**ON SOME OF THE**  
**CHARGES RECENTLY MADE AGAINST**  
**THE EARLY WRITERS**  
**OF THE**  
**SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.**

**BY**  
**GEORGE RICHARDSON.**

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**“We know that all things work together for good to them that  
love God.”**

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## ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

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The substance of the remarks relative to George Fox were given in a letter to a Friend, a few months ago, which letter has been repeatedly copied, and the writer has been frequently recommended to suffer it to be printed.

An earnest desire to rescue the early Friends from *some* of the misrepresentations which of late have been heaped upon them, and to satisfy some tender enquiring minds, that Quakerism is not quite so dangerous a thing as it has been represented to be, has induced the writer to submit the remarks to the perusal of his fellow-members through the medium of the press. Glad would he be to see the subject thoroughly investigated by competent Friends. Had this been attempted earlier, this publication would not have appeared, the writer being deeply sensible of his own incompetency.

*Newcastle, 3d Month, 17th, 1837.*

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## BRIEF REMARKS.

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OUR Lord has assured us that a man's greatest foes are those of his own house ; and for the consolation of his persecuted followers, in all succeeding ages, He permitted himself to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies by one of his own Disciples. It must ever be a bitter ingredient in the cup of suffering when it is forced upon us by some of those with whom in time past we have taken "sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

That several individuals who were long esteemed as Members, and even Ministers in the Society of Friends, should of late time have evinced such a decided and inveterate hostility to the Society and to its long-cherished principles, is, indeed, a painful consideration. It is not needful to investigate the circumstances which appear to have produced this hostile feeling ; the disposition itself, we apprehend, has its origin in that propensity of our fallen nature, which so frequently impels us in avoiding one danger to expose ourselves to another of an opposite character. May the great Head of the church be graciously pleased to sanctify this affliction to our purification, both of flesh and spirit, and to his own glory.

Those who are labouring to tear up our Religious Society by the roots—not merely to lop off what some appear to be deeming the superfluous or decayed branches, but to destroy its very existence, place before their readers a variety of *assumptions* as *facts*. One of these is, that the Society regards our early Friends as infallible. And another is, that their writings are considered as a complete standard of Christian Doctrine.

We do not, and never have, held either of these positions. They did not for themselves claim the attribute of infallibility, though they believed themselves often led and guided by the Infallible Spirit of Truth ; and many of them knew by



But if they had believed themselves infallible, what need for those conflicts of spirit, previously to their surrendering themselves to follow the path of apprehended duty—for that tender care—that watchfulness over their own spirits, and over each other, in order to avoid being deceived by the enemy of souls, or by their own hearts, or with mere imaginations, of which pious care we find in their history and writings a variety of evidence?

Nor do any of them, that I know of, ever hold up their own writings as a perfect code of doctrines: it would have been inconsistent with their daily practice of appealing to the Holy Scriptures—of largely quoting them—and of constraining their numberless opponents to try, both their doctrines and practices by them, being always ready to submit their own to the same test, and at once denying, as erroneous, anything contrary to the Scriptures.

Nevertheless, we are not prepared to let go our hold, as some are advising us to do, of the precious gospel privilege of immediate and direct Inspiration and Revelation. If we do, we shall, in regard to immediate Divine direction, sink below the condition of the Lord's believing and obedient children, both of the Patriarchial, Mosaic, and Prophetical Dispensations; and this, the blessed gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ does not require of us, when it adds to our talents, by putting us into the possession of the Scriptures of the New Testament, in addition to those of the Old, as a further means of knowing the Will of God concerning us. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit, who is free and unrestricted in his operations on the mind of man, was enjoyed, in a less or larger measure, according to the Will of God, by the Lord's believing children in all ages; and is undoubtedly still more largely dispensed, since our Lord Jesus Christ "ascended on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

We could bring most abundant evidence to prove a firm belief in this precious doctrine to be in accordance with the promises, both of the Old and New Testament, and with the experience of wise, enlightened, and upright Christians, of the various ages and denominations.

Elisha Bates and John Wilkinson have each published facsimiles of an old manuscript letter—part of a collection of papers formerly in the possession of a branch of Margaret Fell's family. She lived at Swarthmore, and was the wife of Judge Fell, and afterwards became the wife of Geo. Fox. Upon this letter, written in the year 1652, by Margaret Fell

and her family—most of whom appear to have signed it, these writers lay great stress, in order to prove that George Fox assumed to himself the title and attributes of the Messiah.

That the letter is couched in terms altogether improper, cannot for a moment be disputed. And so precious a document to prove the radical unsoundness of George Fox is it considered, that John Wilkinson not only gives the fac-simile and a fair print of its contents, but in the course of his work, entitled “Quakerism Examined,” he brings it forward to the notice of his reader again and again, not less than five or six times. With apparent exultation and triumph he says, “I present the fac-simile as a basket of genuine first-fruits, which it may fairly be considered to be, because some of the persons whose signatures are affixed to this remarkable document, were individuals of much influence, and were highly esteemed in the society.”

Now, after such an announcement, would the reader believe that the writer of this letter, Margaret Fell, with her children and servants, had only just become acquainted with George Fox for the first time in their lives, or, as far as it appears, with any of his friends? It may be clearly gathered from his Journal, that his first visit to Swarthmore only took place about three months before this letter was written. I have seen the letter many years ago, and ascertained this point by close investigation. Some of the individuals certainly *became* persons of influence and usefulness in the society afterwards—but were they to be considered such at the time they signed this letter? It is perfectly evident that they were in a state of childhood—quickenened indeed—but not grown in the knowledge of spiritual things—some of them appear to have been at the time mere girls; therefore, to lay so much stress on this document, without stating this fact, is uncandid—and to publish it now at all, is uncharitable, and we may safely add, unchristian.

This does not satisfactorily account for the improper expressions used in the letter, but it does show the unfairness of charging the whole blame upon George Fox. Probably some of the language did not then bear precisely the same meaning which it does now; nor was it then customary to have the choice of words, so critically correct, as is usual in the present enlightened age of great and general literary attainments. That Margaret Fell and her family regarded G. Fox as their spiritual father in the gospel, in the sense in which the Apostle Paul claims that relationship with the

Corinthians, is quite clear. That they also considered him as an instrument eminently qualified to promote their edification and spiritual refreshment, is also evident. But the real fact appears to be, that some of the early converts, previously to the fall of James Naylor, and possibly some instances may occur later—intending reverence to the Power and Spirit of Christ, with which these chosen vessels were eminently filled, do not appear on all occasions, in their language at least, to have duly discriminated between the mortal instrument, and that divine influence by which they were actuated. The fall of James Naylor forcibly drew the attention of the yet infant society to this danger; and a perceptible change in their style and phraseology took place. A more chaste assumption of Divine authority, and less fulness of expression, is very observable. Thus a Gracious and Merciful God, by that painful event, gave them a salutary admonition. Much light is thrown upon this subject, in a printed account of the trial and sufferings of James Naylor, by Robert Rich—who was one of those who had been entangled in the snare in which J. Naylor was caught, and into which others were in danger of falling. But to recur to the change which time makes in our language. Wicliff lived nearly two centuries prior to George Fox. In his translation of the New Testament, he puts into the mouth of our Lord the following expression, “If any man serve me, my Father shall worship him.”\* William Penn, cotemporary with George Fox, desires a correspondent in Germany to give his *resentments* to the Princess Elizabeth. How odd these expressions would now sound.—The words eternal and everlasting, do not appear in George Fox’s time to have been so exclusively used, as denoting without beginning or end as they are now. When they call George Fox their “Eternal Father,” they doubtless mean their spiritual father, or their father in the Gospel. “In Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel,” is the language of the Apostle Paul.

Let it also be borne in mind, that this is not the only instance in which young converts have appeared almost to idolize those who have been made instrumental in their conversion. I know not whether the Apostle Paul will escape censure from J. W.’s caustic pen, when he comes to reflect upon the following passage, which occurs in the Epistle to the Galatians:—“Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel to you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor re-

jected ; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."

E. Bates endeavours to insinuate, that George Fox's mind was nearly deranged. This he cannot prove—but, on the contrary, there is abundant evidence of a remarkably strong and firm mind. None of the instances adduced, prove mental derangement—unless visions realized—prophecies fulfilled—and a few, not many—miraculous cures—well attested, and never disproved, are evidence of it. By some men, such things are so considered—but even this is no new thing—the Apostles of our Lord were at some times accounted drunk—and of Paul it was said, "much learning hath made thee mad."

If George Fox's mind had not been frequently in an excited state, especially in the year 1652, he must have been more than human. About this time his sufferings, privations, and the success of his ministry, were all remarkably great.

It appears from his Journal, that from a variety of causes he frequently passed whole days without food—at some places he was not even permitted to have it for money. At page 59 he mentions, not having eaten for some days—at 66, he again intimates, that he had eaten or drunk little for several days—at 68, got a little water for dinner—at 95, he mentions having fasted for 10 days, during a time of great trial and conflict.

His lodging was frequently in the open air. Thus we meet with such expressions as these, "sat under a haystack till morning"—"lay under a hedge"—"lay in a wood during a wet night"—"up all night conversing"—"lay in a hay-stack that night in rain and snow—it being but three days before the time called Christmas"—"out in the fields at night, as I often used to be." Then, in addition to this, he was frequently subjected to very cruel usage, by violent beatings, stonings, &c. Great stress is now laid on the necessity of Faith, and very properly—for without it, there can be no true religion. But was he not eminently walking by faith? Was he not of the number of those of whom the world was not worthy—being destitute, afflicted, tormented; yet by the mighty power of God, "putting to flight the armies of aliens," confounding by the spirit and wisdom with which he spake, his numerous opponents, though many of them were men of learning and high professors of religion; who, having the form of Godliness, were denying the power thereof.

How dare these apostatizing friends thus attempt to vilify and calumniate the character of such a man? Was the work in which he was engaged, of man or of God? Does it not

bear indubitable evidence of the latter origin—whether we regard the almost numberless conversions and convincements then produced, notwithstanding J. W.'s contemptuous insinuations to the contrary—men turned from darkness unto light—from the power of Satan unto God. Men, wicked, cruel, and even blood-thirsty persecutors, arrested in the midst of their guilty career—their violence subdued—their nature changed, even into the meekness, innocence, and the gentleness of the Lamb.

Or let us consider the fruits of the principles of George Fox and his brethren, down to the present period, wherever they have been heartily and sincerely embraced. Has any other religious society produced a larger proportion of men, who, being imbued with love to God and man, have adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour, by a humble circumspect life and conversation—and who have died in the full assurance of hope of a blissful eternity: not trusting in their own works, but in the mercy of God, in and through Christ Jesus our Lord?

Many, indeed, as they have approached the confines of the grave, have had to wade through bitter conflicts, which might have been avoided, by a more entire submission to the Cross of Christ and to the purifying influence of those blessed principles in which they have been instructed—even the enlightening rays and powerful operation of the Holy Spirit of Truth. I have seen several die, and have read the death-bed annals of hundreds more—and this is my conviction, as to the members of our Religious Society, after an attentive consideration of the subject, that a large proportion are mercifully favoured to end well.

It is impossible, within a brief compass, to do more than make a few general remarks. The first three lines of the "Appeal" by E. Bates, might seem to afford ample scope for animadversion and reply, viz.:—

"The question, whether Christianity, as plainly set forth in the Holy Scriptures, shall be received, or even tolerated by the Society of Friends, is now fairly at issue."—Appeal, page 1.

The writer of the introduction to the Appeal says:—"The Society of Friends has, from its first origin down to the present time, been most grievously defective in the estimate which it has, in *practice*, formed of the authority of the Holy Scripture."—Introduction, page 4. Again,

"Nor can it excite surprise, that he (E. Bates) should be impelled by a sense of duty, to use the means thus providen-

tially placed in his hands (the old manuscripts before alluded to) once more, to warn his fellow-members against the errors which *originated with the founder*, and have ever since influenced the doctrines and practice of the Society."—Page 5.

The first point to examine in reply to these allegations is, was George Fox himself a sound believer in the essential doctrines of the Gospel? Our Lord says, "Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good."

I have already proved, and it is universally allowed, that the doctrines taught by George Fox, when faithfully put in practice, do produce good fruit. This according to our Lord Jesus Christ, is presumptive evidence that George Fox was sound in Christian Doctrine. By their fruits ye shall know them. Let us now examine his writings.

Journal, Edition 1765, page 4, first paragraph, affords full proof of his belief in the manhood, in the Godhead, and in the propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "This priest, Stevens, asked me, 'Why Christ cried out upon the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And why, he said, 'if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will but thine be done?' I told him, at that time, the sins of all mankind were upon Him; and their iniquities and transgressions with which he was wounded, which he was to bear, and be an offering for as he was man, but died not as he was God; so in that he died for all men, tasting death for every man, he was an offering for the sins of the whole world. This, I spoke, being at that time in a measure sensible of Christ's sufferings. The priest said, it was a very good full answer, and such a one as he had not heard."

E. Bates's remarks on the *sorrows* which George Fox passed through are most extraordinary. He has adopted water baptism. Does he mean really to undervalue—is he about to speak disparagingly of the true and essential baptism of Christ (the dispensation which George Fox was passing through at the time alluded to, evidently being of this character)—as though these conflicts were evidence of unsoundness of faith in the article of justification. He describes G. Fox, as though he had not the joy and peace of a true Christian, in believing; but let us attend to G. F.'s own account.

Page 7. "As I cannot declare the misery I was in, it was so great and heavy upon me, so neither can I set forth the mercies of God to me, in all my misery. O! the *everlasting* love of God to my soul, when I was in great distress! When my troubles and torments were great, then was His love exceeding great." He then describes how he was led to the pure

knowledge of God and of Christ Jesus, without the help of any "man, book, or writing;" that is to a faith or knowledge which no man, book, or writing alone, could communicate. "This is life eternal, says our Lord, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This passage has been much objected to by E. B., as though it were a disparagement of the Scriptures.

In corroboration of the correctness of the view which G. Fox took of this subject, I shall give a short extract from an eminent minister of the Church of England, which may, perhaps, have weight with some, who condemn the writings of friends. He says in one of his sermons:—"Now, beloved brethren, as I am here speaking scripture language, and am delivering a very important truth, I wish it to be well understood, and deeply imprinted on your minds. The Holy Scripture, the written Word of God, lies open to all—and blessed be God, that we have the Bible on such easy terms, and in our own language! Jesus, in my text, affirms, 'That no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.' You will allow that this does not mean simply, he to whom the Son shall give the book—that is give the Scriptures, as a written or printed book—for that lies open, precisely the same, to one man as to another. Remember then to your last moments, that there is a further information requisite, beyond the mere letter of the book; a Divine illumination, which cannot be dispensed with—to enable a person rightly to comprehend and use the sacred scriptures. In this precious book there are no superfluous expressions. The words of our Lord are very remarkable; the Son of God declares, that we cannot without his special help and *revelation*, understand the nature of God, and the relation in which we stand to Him. Only let the text have its plain meaning, and let it press on your judgments and consciences, with its due weight and importance, and then I may hope to conclude this subject with some useful words of application."—Isaac Milner.

George Fox, after describing some of his deep baptisms and exercises, says, "Thus in the deepest miseries, in the greatest sorrows and temptations that beset me, the Lord in his mercy did help me." A little after, he adds, "I cried to the Lord, saying, 'Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit these evils?' And the Lord answered, 'It was needful I should have a sense of all conditions; how else should I speak to all conditions.' In this I saw the infinite love of God."

Page 61,—He speaks of declaring the word of life to the people, and directing them to their teacher, Christ Jesus, who died for them, that they might hear him, and receive salvation by him.

At page 64 he says, the truth was powerfully declared, the Scriptures wonderfully opened, the parables and sayings of Christ expounded. He again speaks of Christ who *bought them*, and was the Saviour of all men who believe in Him.

The above quotations, with many others which may be given, prove how uncandid the remark at page 7 of the "Appeal" is, where it is insinuated as though Geo. Fox had not a clear view of the remission of sins through faith in a crucified Redeemer.

At page 21, in describing the doctrines which he was sent to preach, he says, "I saw Christ died for all men, was a propitiation for all, and enlightened all men and women by his divine and saving light." At page 75, he describes the universality of the effects of the fall of man: how he fell from the image of God; but that he may be again renewed into it. At page 77, he asserts the indwelling of God, and of Christ, and of *Redemption by His blood*. At page 97, he bears full testimony to his faith in Christ, in his various offices of Shepherd, Bishop, Priest, and Prophet. At 67, he speaks of Christ as the Head of the Church.

At page 82, he declares the Holy Scriptures to be given forth by the Inspiration of God; and how we come to have fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Scriptures; and declares Jesus Christ to be the way to the Father. He also speaks of *taking a Bible* and opening to the people the Scriptures, and of thoroughly satisfying Judge Fell by the Scriptures.

At page 76, he explains what it is to speak in the Word of the Lord, and of ministers being endued with power from on high. At page 98, he declared largely the way of Truth and Life to the people, and directed them to Christ, their teacher, who died for them and who bought them with his blood.—This is George Fox's Quakerism. It is also genuine Scriptural Christianity.

Now let us hear his own testimony, that we may be the better able to judge whether he really did, as as been asserted, assume to himself the attributes of the Messiah.—These "accusers of the brethren" have spoken or written so reproachfully of the early Friends, that we may well feel alarmed; and then, to secure their testimony from the hazard of contradiction, they have so misrepresented and calum-



niated the writings of these our worthy predecessors, and attempted to make it appear that it is even dangerous to read them, and highly criminal to circulate them, that there is a great danger of many being deterred by this terrible outcry of "mephitic vapour," and "the smoke of the bottomless pit," and such like opprobrious epithets, by which their writings have been designated, from so searching into them for themselves, as to afford the accused writers a fair opportunity of pleading their own cause. Many of them have most amply done this, and need but to be read, with a candid and unprejudiced mind effectually to vindicate, and satisfactorily to explain, their real principles and views. Let us but engage in the research, in that humility of mind and reverence of spirit before God, which becomes us on so important an occasion, and in the spirit of Christian charity, making those allowances, in cases where these writers may appear to us to have been a little warped from the straight line of pure doctrine or practice, which is fairly due to persons circumstanced as they were, in a period of hot persecution, and amidst the conflicts of the most subtle controversies, often carried on with considerable warmth on both sides.

In the year 1650, when at Derby, G. Fox was taken before the magistrates. His examination lasted from one o'clock to nine o'clock at night. In the course of it, they put many questions to him: "At last they asked me whether I was sanctified? I answered yes; for I was in the Paradise of God. Then they asked me if I had no sin? I answered, Christ, my Saviour, has taken away my sin; and in him there is no sin. They asked how we knew that Christ did abide in us? I said by his Spirit that he hath given us. They temptingly asked *if any of us were Christ?* I answered, *no, we were nothing, Christ was all.*" After the examination, he, with another, was committed to the house of correction for six months, as a blasphemer.

In a letter which he wrote to the Priests and Magistrates, who were engaged in his commitment, he says, "You shew forth the vain nature, you stand in the steps of them *that crucified my Saviour*, and mocked him."

At page 61, describing a meeting which he attended, he adds, "there came a man to that meeting, who had been at one before, and raised a false accusation against me, and made a noise up and down the country, reporting *that I said I was Christ*, which was utterly false;—again, this false accuser came in, and charged me openly before the people, 'That I said I was Christ, and he had got witnesses to prove it,' which put

the people into such a rage, that they had much to do to keep their hands off me. I was moved of the Lord to stand upon a table, in the eternal power of God, and tell the people, 'That Christ was in them, except they were reprobates; and that it was Christ, the eternal power of God, that spoke in me at that time unto them, *not that I was Christ*. And the people were greatly satisfied, except himself, a professor, and his own false witnesses. I called the accuser Judas, and was moved to tell him, that Judas's end should be his; that was the word of the Lord, and of Christ, through me to him. The Lord's power came over all, and quieted the minds of the people, and they departed in peace. But this Judas *shortly afterwards hanged himself*—and a stake was driven into his grave."

I have read the writings of Geo. Fox very extensively, and I do not recollect an instance of any passage by which it appeared that he ever viewed himself in any higher character than that of a properly called and qualified Gospel Minister. I do fully believe that he was at times endued with the spirit of prophecy, and that this gift is not yet wholly withdrawn from the church, neither in our own Society nor amongst other denominations, however some may sneer at this remark. The above passage, of his foretelling the miserable end of the false accuser, is one instance, in my judgment. His foretelling so minutely, the dissolution of the long parliament when sitting in Judge Fell's house, as related at page 94 of his Journal, is another.

In the great labour and pains which the writer of the Appeal has taken to hold George Fox and his writings up to scorn and contempt, he sometimes overshoots the mark. Thus after dwelling at great length on the extraordinary visit to Litchfield, as at page 9, in a note he adds,—“As to the martyrdom of 1000 Christians at Litchfield, in the time of the Emperor Dioclesian (as stated by George Fox), I have not been able, *after considerable research*, to find any foundation for the story.” Now it happens that this historical fact is supported by the most unquestionable evidence, as is shown in the following extract, which is supported by Camden (vol. i., second edition, page 640), also by Dr. Johnson in his Dictionary, word Lich.\*

\* Extract from a Work called “*The Antiquities of Ancient Britain*,” by Aylett Sammes, of Christ College, in Cambridge. Folio, 1676.

“CHAP. xiii.—Wars between the Britains and Romans—Reign of the Emperors Dioclesian and Maximian.

“Peace thus established in Britain. and the state quieted. Dioclesian.

The passage already quoted relative to the false accusation, as well as his answer to the magistrates of Derby, proves most distinctly, how unfounded the charge is, that Geo. Fox ever entertained the idea that he was the Messiah, or thought or said that he was Christ, or the Son of God in the sense in which our Lord Jesus Christ was. The expression in the letter, in which he is charged with calling himself the Son of God, if it contain his real expressions can only mean that he regarded himself as a child or Son of God, in the sense intended by the Apostle John, when he says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God." 1 John iii. 1. Similar language is used in many other parts of Scripture.

But it is not difficult for the intelligent and candid mind to discern how it was, that George Fox came to express himself in the style which it appears, by this letter, he on that occasion did use.

who had hitherto employed his valour with success against his enemies, now used his rage in a Bloody Persecution against his innocent and obedient subjects, the Christians.

"This is the Tenth Persecution, and of all the foregoing, the most bloody, and of longest continuance: the fatal bill of their martyrdom was seventeen thousand a month, besides infinite numbers that suffered by Confiscation, Banishment, Prisons, &c.

"The Christian Churches were everywhere demolished, their Bibles sought out and burned, and death for any one to conceal them, and all means practised, not only to extinguish the Professors, but to root out the very name of their Religion.

"The most remarkable that had their shares in Britain were, first, Alban of Verulam, beheaded at Holmhurst, since called Derswould, where now the Town of St. Alban's (bearing his name,) is built; of whom Fortunatus Priscus, in his book of the praise of Virginity writes.

"Next his Instructour Amphibolus, then Julius, and Aaron of Caerleon, upon Uske in Monmouthshire, Bede saith of Leicestershire; and in *Litchfield* so many, that the place became another Golgotha, and so the name importeth, as John Ross of Warwick reporteth, namely the field of dead bodies. For this cause, the city even unto this day, (saith Mr. Speed,) doth bear for their seal of Arms an Eschochean or Field charged with many Martyrs.

"Dioclesian and Maximian reigned 20 years, and resigned the Empire to their two Cesars, Constantius and Galerius.

"Dioclesian retired into Dalmatia, and lived a private life in the city Salonia, where afterwards he poisoned himself says Aurelius Victor. Eusebius reporteth he died mad.

"Maximian again attempting to resume the Empire, was slain for contriving the murder of Constantius, Eusebius avoucheth he hanged himself in the city Marseilles, thus ended these two tyrants." Page 383.

N.B. I have been told by a friend who has seen it, that the city arms are cut in stone, and placed on the front of the Court-house—representing mangled bodies.

The Protector, before he would grant his liberty, required him to draw up, in his own language, and sign a paper to the import, that he and his friends would not take up arms, or unite with those who should, to overturn his government.—Therefore, George Fox tells him, that his kingdom—or that kingdom for which he was contending, was not of this world—that he, being a Son of God, was redeemed from wars, fightings, or the use of carnal weapons, or the love of worldly glory. This is evidently the plain English of the letter ; nor can it be believed, that if he had written blasphemy, that Oliver Cromwell, who was well versed, at least in the theory of religion, would have tolerated it—or most especially that he would have treated G. Fox with the kindness, which it appears on this occasion, he did.

That George Fox wrote much with his own hand, as well as by that of others cannot be doubted by any candid mind, who has properly considered the question. He wrote nearly 3,000 folio pages : 117 epistles of the printed collection, were written in one year.

Can it then be thought surprising, that solitary expressions are to be met with, which are inaccurately worded, especially taking into account his want of school learning, and negligent style of writing—still less, that things written *to him*, have escaped, as far as now appears, that animadversion which they required. His practice, in the latter part of his life, was to fold up, and label or endorse papers of all sorts, which had come into his possession ; for preservation, that others might examine them when he was gone, as he has expressed.—The many afflictions, severe hardships and sufferings which he had passed through, brought on a variety of bodily infirmities and somewhat of premature old age. The concerns of the society pressed heavily upon him. He was applied to for advice upon many occasions, and had to maintain an extensive correspondence, which must have absorbed much of his time. But now, to lay open the infirmities of such a man, as some are doing, (few as they were,) is an utter violation of christian charity, and of that respect and veneration to which his character is justly entitled ; and is inflicting a wound upon the cause of christianity itself—in defence of which, he stood forth, a *noble, laborious, disinterested, and uncompromising advocate*.

But what will the world gain—what will any individual gain—if these dissentients should succeed in destroying Quakerism ? Verily, nothing, but the gratification of their own wills, at the expense of a large portion of genuine spiritual religion.

I once heard one of these dissentients say, "That there was a time when he was almost wrecked on the Rock of Scruples;" and others of them have spoken freely out on this subject, as though it were all a delusion to suppose there is granted to us a "light within" ourselves to guide us in our conduct through life. Dangerous doctrine! Is not this almost to teach men to disregard the strivings of the Lord's Holy Spirit; for what else is the "Inward Light," which convicts of sin, and is a voice behind us, saying, "This is the way, walk in it, when we are in danger of turning to the right hand or to the left." Yea, is that state to be despised, which trembles at the sound of the word of the living God speaking in the secret of the soul? Are not the reproofs of instruction the way of life? Is it not to teach men to despise the day of small things; that holy discipline by which the will is broken, and made subject to the Divine Will? Is not *this* the state to which the mysteries of the kingdom are opened, and the blood of sprinkling applied, which speaketh better things than that of Abel?

May all those who retain their attachment to the Society, and to its principles, guard carefully against "seducing spirits;" but in this day of deep trial and of conflict, when some, of whom we hoped better things, are giving a wide spread to gross misrepresentation, and preferring calumnious accusations against both ancient and modern Friends, as though either they or we rejected or undervalued the Holy Scriptures, or the precious truths and essential doctrines of Christianity.

The working of this subtle spirit which has got abroad; this old accuser of the Brethren—has been very insidious; it has been at work for many years—but durst not avow its real object and character. It pretended it was attacking Hicksism, but it was easy to see, long ago, that genuine Quakerism was meant. It is now throwing off the mask, and showing itself in its true colours.

But the pure and genuine principles of the Society, I trust, will yet be maintained and defended through the gracious assistance and interposition of the Holy Head of the Church, and that it will be made appear that they are no other than those of true Christianity, as inculcated in the New Testament.

May He who is given for a Leader and Commander—for a Light to the people\* and to the Gentiles† yet be with us—yea, may all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God,‡ that his holy name may be glorified.

## ISAAC PENINGTON.

In the Address to the Members of the Society of Friends, by Elisha Bates, at page 5, he quotes a passage from a tract written by Isaac Penington, entitled, "An Incitation to Professors, seriously to consider whether they or we fail in the true acknowledgment and owning of the Christ which died at Jerusalem."

This tract E. B. calls one of the most objectionable ever written by our early Friends—and blames Friends greatly for reprinting it, which he says was done at Manchester—but the real fact is, that an extract from it was previously published and widely circulated by some of the Dissentients at Bristol, with the design apparently of bringing the writings of I. Penington, and other early Friends, into contempt, which induced a Friend, at Manchester, to print it more at length, with the view of allowing the writer to explain his own views more fully. If the tract is unsound, the revival of it is chargeable upon the Dissentients and not upon the Society, as E. B. has insinuated. The passage, in question, is the following:—

"Now the Scriptures do expressly distinguish between Christ and the garment which he wore, between him that came, and the body in which he came; between the substance which was veiled, and the veil which veiled it. Lo! I come, a body hast thou prepared me! There is plainly he, and the body in which he came. There was the outward vessel and the inward life. This we certainly know, and can never call the bodily garment Christ, but that which appeared and dwelt in the body."

"That the Hicksites selected this passage, as setting forth their doctrines, is undoubtedly proved by their publications. And that it does completely correspond with their own expositions of their belief, expressed in their own language, is abundantly proved by the same evidence."

"It is not my intention at all to inquire what were the ideas I. P. intended to convey by this extraordinary mode of expression. But we do know for what object it was selected in America, and what doctrine was actually promulgated by it. It represents Jesus not as the Christ, but as the bodily garment of Christ, and positively declares, that we never can call that bodily garment Christ!! If this be not denying that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, then no language, with which I am acquainted, can make that denial"

Again, he calls the sentence "a plain positive denial of the Lord Jesus to be the Christ."

Now let us take notice that Isaac Penington asserts, "That the Scriptures do expressly distinguish between Christ, and the garment which he wore; between him that came and the body in which he came; between the substance which was veiled and the body which veiled it."

When we consider the great stress which E. Bates, in his writings, lays on the necessity of appealing to Holy Scripture for the settlement of doctrinal controversy, or establishing of Articles of Faith, we might fairly have expected that he would, at least, have endeavoured to prove by Scripture that I. P. was in error, when he makes the above assertion, that the *Scriptures* do expressly distinguish, &c. E. Bates, however, does not pursue this course—he makes no appeal to Scripture—but states that the Hicksites, in America, made use of the passage in question, in support of their errors; and then goes on most unfairly, as I conceive, to infer that I. P. in these expressions denies Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ; calling the passage a plain positive denial of the Lord Jesus to be the Christ.

Whilst I. P. was living, it may be questioned whether there were many amongst his numerous opponents who would have ventured to bring the charge against him, in the bold unqualified manner in which E. B. has done it; and when we consider that the latter, at the time when he wrote the paragraph, stood as an acknowledged minister in that religious society, whose welfare and prosperity I. P. so ardently sought, in obedience to the will, and in promotion of the kingdom of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ; we may well conclude, that E. B. is involved in the guilt of those who "smite their fellow-servants."

The passage of scripture which I. P. has quoted, appears to me fully to bear him out in the assertion that the scriptures do distinguish, &c. "Lo! I come, a body thou hast prepared me." The Evangelist John says, "The word was made flesh," that is, "dwelt or tabernacled in flesh" (Purver); which must be the sense of John i. 14. The Apostle Paul says, "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also *himself* took part of the same," Heb. ii. 14. And again, "He took on him the seed of Abraham," v. 16. The same Apostle calls his flesh the "veil," Heb. x. 20. But our Lord's own words to the Jews, appear to me very conclusive, "Before Abraham was I am," and again; "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." It is added, "He spake of the temple of his body." John ii. 19. 21.

E. B. remarks, page 5, "It is not my intention at all to enquire what were the ideas I. P. intended to convey, by this extraordinary mode of expression." But would not Christian charity, or even equal-handed justice, have dictated to him the duty of spending a little labour on such an enquiry; before he presumed to pronounce a dear departed brother—an elder in the church—a minister of Christ—a sincere, humble, self-denying Disciple of the Lord Jesus, such I. P. assuredly was—an heretic of the worst description. May the Lord unfold to his understanding the error he has committed—and lead him to sincere repentance.

I. P. in vol. 1, p. 28, 3d edition of his works—in the paper intitled "On the Threefold Appearance of Christ," says concerning Christ's appearing in a body of flesh, "He who thus appeared in several types and shadows, among that people of the Jews, under the law; he now came down from the Father, debasing himself, and clothed himself like a man, partaking of flesh and blood; and was in all things made like unto us, (excepting sin,) for he was the Lamb without spot, humbling himself to come under the law, (and under the curse,) by fulfilling the righteousness thereof; and bringing them through into the Righteousness everlasting."

"Now while he was in the body, his glory did shine to the children of the true wisdom, his Disciples, (to whom, not flesh and blood, nor the wisdom and knowledge which they could get from the letter, but his Father revealed him,) they saw the hidden glory? they saw through the veil of his flesh, and beheld him as the only begotten of his Father, full of Grace and Truth."

"Now in this body, he finished the work which his Father gave him to do; he fulfilled all Righteousness, &c.

"Thus he did always please the Father, and seek the honour of him that sent him; and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; being willing to drink of the cup which his Father gave him to drink, and so having finished his work, he returned from whence he came, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; being exalted above all principalities and powers, and dominions, both in this world, and that which is to come."

I. P. thus concludes the chapter:—"He that hath a true eye let him read this; and he that hath an heart opened to the Lord, let him acknowledge it; for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is exalted, and the knees of his redeemed ones bow to Him, and acknowledge him the only anointed one, the only Lord and King over all, to the Glory of God the



See also Vol. II., page 553, "Concerning Christ's being manifested without, and his being also manifested within, and how both are owned by them that know the Truth."

I believe it may safely be said, that few men have evinced a more unremitting solicitude to promote the Glory of God and the Salvation of the souls of men, than Isaac Penington.

Being the son of an Alderman of the City of London, he was brought up in comparative affluence—yet after he united himself to the Society of Friends, though of a weakly constitution of body, he patiently endured repeated imprisonments—and on one occasion, rather than disobey the precept of the Lord Jesus Christ, by taking an oath in the course of a suit at law, in which a kinsman involved him, he submitted to be deprived of a handsome estate of land, &c. situated near Reading. His numerous little detached pieces, which from time to time issued from his pen, evince the pious frame of his spirit, great devotedness to God, and an unwearied assiduity to promote the welfare of all, even of his bitter persecutors. They also evince high spiritual attainments—an almost constant communion with God—and a great depth of penetration into the mysteries of the kingdom. His style is diffuse, —and at times tautological—but a sincere enquirer after the way of life and salvation, may derive abundant edification and instruction from the perusal of his writings. That there are no passages, in the six octavo volumes, ambiguously worded, or unguardedly expressed, we do not assert; but the general scope and tendency of his writings is to establish and sustain the genuine doctrines of the New Testament.

## WILLIAM PENN.

Amongst the numerous attempts which have lately been made to prejudice the minds of the Members of the Society of Friends against the works of what have hitherto been considered as their standard writers, we may notice a work published by Richard Ball, entitled, "Holy Scripture, the Test of Truth." At page 7 of this work, the author appears to unite with those who charge William Penn with denying the Deity of Christ. How unjust this insinuation is, will appear at large by consulting Joseph Besse's defence of Wm. Penn against the charge of Deism. This good man, and able defender of the doctrines of sound Christianity, was by turns charged with Romanism, Deism, Socinianism, and numerous other errors.

Being, as he was, largely engaged in controversy, and oftentimes, as must ever be the case, more awake to refute the arguments or positions of his antagonist, than careful clearly to define his own views, he sometimes expressed himself in such a manner as was open to misapprehension on the part of his hearers or readers. This has been the origin of many of the charges and accusations which have been brought against him; and there cannot be a doubt but that in reference to some such instances, had he been aware of this danger at the time, he would have been more guarded in his language.

That William Penn was, however, a firm believer in the Godhead, as well as of the Manhood of Christ, before he wrote the tract entitled, "The Sandy Foundation Shaken," as well as near the close of his life, as R. B. insinuates, is capable of full proof. He was admitted a Member, and soon after acknowledged as a Minister in the Society of Friends, about the latter part of the year 1667, or early in the following year.

His first tract published, after being so recognized, was entitled "Truth Exalted;" the second was "The Guide Mistaken," which is a controversial piece in answer to a book by a Minister, called Jonathan Clapham.

In this tract, see page 14, second volume, folio, of his works; after propounding certain queries concerning the doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction, he adds, "Thou must not, reader, from my querying thus, conclude that we do deny (as he hath falsely charged us) those Glorious Three who bear record in Heaven, the Father, Word, and Spirit; neither the Infinity, Eternity, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, for that we

know he is the Mighty God : nor what the Father sent the Son to do on the behalf of lost man ; declaring to the whole world, we know no other name *by which Atonement, Salvation, and plenteous Redemption comes.*

At page 18, he adds, " In reality they (the Quakers) own no other name by which Salvation is obtainable than the Christ of God ; and all the offices that ever were assigned him by his Father, are by them acknowledged.

" His next report is, we call not upon God in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ. But, Reader, that thou mayst not thus be dogmatised upon, but better satisfied in thy sober inquiries, assure thyself the Quakers never knew any other name than that of Jesus Christ, through which to find acceptance with the Lord ; nor is it by any other than Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant, by whom they expect Redemption, and may receive the promise of an Eternal Inheritance."

" They are so far from disowning the death and sufferings of Christ, that there is not a people on the earth that so assuredly witness and demonstrate a fellowship therewith ; confessing before Men and Angels, that Christ died for the sins of the World and gave his life a Ransom."

The tract, from which the above extracts are made, was written and published in the year 1668, before he wrote the "Sandy Foundation Shaken," though that was written in the same year.

We will annex a copy of a letter, on the same subject, in William Penn's own words :—

*Extract of a Letter from WILLIAM PENN to JOHN COLLEGES, dated Rickmansworth, 22 of 11 Mo. 1673.*

" The matter insisted upon relating chiefly to us on this occasion was, ' That we, in common with Socinians do not believe Christ to be the eternal Son of God : ' and I am brought forward for proof of the charge. To this hath been already answered, that my book called ' The Sandy Foundation Shaken, ' touched not upon this, but ' *Trinity* ' and ' *separate personality.* ' &c. But this will not serve thy turn : thou must both accuse us, and then wring and rack our books to maintain it. I have two things to do : first, to show I express nothing that divested Christ of his Divinity, next, to declare my true meaning and faith in the matter.

" I am to suppose that when my adversary goes about to prove his charge against me, out of my own book, he takes that which is most to his purpose. Now let us see what thou

hast taken out of that book so evidently demonstrating the truth of thy assertion: I find nothing more to thy purpose than this, that I deny a Trinity of *separate Persons* in the Godhead: ergo, what? ergo, William Penn denies Christ to be the only true God; or, that Christ the Son of God is from everlasting to everlasting God. Did ever man yet hear of such argumentation? Doth Dr. Collenges know logic no better! But (which is more condemnable in a Minister) hath he learnt charity so ill? Are not Trinity and Personality one thing, and Christ's being the eternal Son of God another?—Must I, therefore, necessarily deny his Divinity, because I justly reject the *Popish School Personality*? This savours of such weakness or dis-ingenuity, as can never stand with the credit of so great a scribe to be guilty of.

“But now I will tell thee my faith in this matter: I do heartily believe that Jesus Christ is the only true and everlasting God, by whom all things were made that are made, in the Heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth; that He is as omnipotent as omniscient and omnipresent, therefore God. This is confessed by me in two books, printed a little before, ‘The Sandy Foundation Shaken,’ viz., ‘Guide Mistaken,’ page 28, and ‘Truth Exalted,’ page 14, 15; also at large in my ‘Innocency with her open Face.’ I think I have dealt very honestly with thee, I am sure to the satisfaction of my own conscience, and it is not my fault if it be not to the better information of thine. What dangerous enquiry and wanton curiosity is that, which cannot sit down with this Scripture definition, ‘There be three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit?’ The confusion both ancient and modern doctors have been brought into by their human inquisition after this mystery, sufficiently proves how much better it is to let it alone; for they do but fool themselves in meddling, and more in determining about things, they are at last forced to say they do not understand.

“He that would not have me mistaken on purpose to render his charge against me just, whether it be so or not, may see in my apology for ‘The Sandy Foundation Shaken,’ that I otherwise meant than I am characterized.”

As an instance of the extreme pressure under which some of our early Friends had to sustain their principles in public disputes, may be mentioned the case of Thomas Lloyd, who was called upon by the Bishop of St. Asaph to give his reasons for separating from the Church of England. The conference lasted more than two days. On the last day the

Bishop forced Thomas Lloyd into no less than twenty-eight Syllogisms *extempore*, which were put down in writing as they were delivered, on the subjects of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Thomas Lloyd acquitted himself so well on this occasion, that the Bishop greatly commended his learning. *Clarkson's Life of Penn, Vol. 2, p. 145.*

Thomas Clarkson gives another instance of the caution and discrimination which was necessary in the management of these public disputes. It occurred in the case of William Penn when engaged with Thomas Hicks and others, of the Baptist persuasion, as related at page 124, 1st vol. of the above work. Hicks had appointed a meeting when he knew William Penn and G. Whitehead were out of town, and on that occasion was considered triumphant. William Penn demanded another meeting, which T. Clarkson thus describes :—

“When the parties met, there was much noise and rioting. The Baptists were clamorous against ‘The Christian Quaker and his divine Testimony vindicated.’—‘If,’ cried they, ‘Christ was the Light within, where was his manhood?’ and they made so much noise, that they obliged, as it were, the Quakers to sustain a controversy on this point. This having been acceded to, the tumult subsided, and the meeting passed into silence, decorum, and good order.

“I can nowhere find any printed account of this controversy; but as there is extant the fragment of a very curious letter written by William Penn to George Fox on this occasion, I shall make an extract from its contents. ‘Thy fatherly love,’ says he, ‘and tender care I do with all gentleness and true respect receive; but thou shalt understand the occasion of our answer, wherein we stated that ‘the holy manhood was a member of the Christ of God.’

“The question was, ‘If the manhood were a part of Christ?’ To this we must either have answered nothing, or only a Scripture, or in the terms of the question, or as we did.

“If we had answered nothing, we had gratified the enemy, stumbled the moderate, and grieved friends.

“If a Scripture, it had been no way satisfactory; for the question, they would have said, was not about the text, but about the understanding of it; and they would have charged us with so wresting it to a mystical sense, as to shut out the person that appeared in the flesh; so that, if we had answered them in any of those Scriptures, they would have asked, in all probability, what man do you mean? the spiritual and heavenly man? the new creature or creation? or that out-

ward man, that was outwardly born of the Virgin in Palestine, and was there outwardly crucified? If we had said no, we had been lost. That they would have put a mystical construction on our words, if we had not answered them plainly, that is, by what we understood by the Scripture, rather than by the Scripture itself, I have cause to believe, because the same person that proposed the question thus expounded, after the meeting, our belief in Christ, 'that he was born of a virgin, that is, of a virgin-nature and spirit; crucified, that is, slain by sin in us; rose, that is, rose up to rule us, and the like,'—making the people believe, that we denied that person, that outwardly appeared, to be the true Christ.

"Further if we had answered in the terms of the question, we had taken Christ into *parts*, whereas I cried twice to them, 'Christ is not to be divided into parts.' But they still pressed the question, six thousand people, I believe, being present, and many of them were desirous of an answer. Upon this, Friends consented that it should be answered them, 'that the manhood was a part of Christ.' But I feared the word *part*, and chose rather to say that we believed the holy manhood to be a *member* of the Christ of God, and my reasons for so doing were these: First, What needed we to grant more than was asked? Friends only desired to have us grant that the manhood was a part of Christ, in order to overthrow T. Hicks's attempts to prove us no Christians; and that was of so great moment in that solemn and great assembly, as tongue cannot utter. Secondly, since we were willing to go no further in our confessions than they asked at our hands, this was my reason for rejecting the word *part* for *member*, to wit, that a body may be taken into members without breach of union, but not into parts. A member divides not: parts divide. Christ is called the head, that is, the most noble member, the Church, the body, and particulars are styled members of that body. Now calling these members *divides them not into parts*. Thirdly, I did not say, it was *but* a member, and I often repeated, that it was *of and belonging to Christ*, and in my confession at the close I said, that we believed in Christ, *both as he was the man Jesus, and God over all blessed for ever*. And I am sure that Paul divides him more than we did, Rom. ix. 5, since he makes a distinction between Christ as God, and Christ as man. Now if that hold, the one was not completely Christ without the other, as said these Baptists. Therefore G. K. said, that he was most excellently called so as God, less excellently as man, and least excellently as to his body. We might truly

say then, that the *body was a member or belonging to the true Christ*; and if we had said more, we had gone too far, as I have learned. But, blessed be the Lord! I have not sought to comprehend or imagine; but as I am furnished upon the occasion, so it goes. I value the invisible touches and feeling of heavenly virtue and life beyond it all, nor am I delighted with these matters: but, dear George, I confess I never heard any Friend speak so fully as to Christ's manhood as thyself. I think so much in print in our name as a people would remove much prejudice, and the contest would come more to power against power, than words against words; only we must remember, that Christ is said to have been in the wilderness, and to have brought the people out of Egypt. If so, then he was Christ before he was born of the Virgin, and the apostle says that Christ is God, and that all things were made by him; though doubtless the great and glorious appearance might by way of eminency most properly deserve and require that title. As for those gross terms of *human flesh* and *human blood*, I never spoke or wrote them since I knew the Lord's truth. And this, I must needs say, we have been as poor tossed sheep up and down, much abused, vilified, and belied: but over all God is raising the strong horn of his salvation, and he has magnified his name in all these bustles and stirs; and Truth has manifestly gotten ground, and in no one thing more than our plain confessions of Christ: so much had the Devil roosted and nestled himself in them under their misapprehensions of our words in that particular: and if any weakness attended the phrasing of it, I hope and believe the simplicity in which it was delivered will hide it from the evil watcher."

Considering how strongly William Penn has been suspected (and is by many to this day) of not being sound in his belief of the Godhead of Christ, I consider this letter of great value. It was written to one of his most intimate friends, to whom we may be satisfied he would express his genuine sentiments. Now in this letter he incidentally, but most unequivocally, owns and asserts the Godhead as well as the manhood of Christ. Were we sufficiently aware of all the circumstances attending their controversies, there cannot be a doubt but that many of the difficulties which occur in their writings would be cleared up.

## ROBERT BARCLAY HIS OWN INTERPRETER.

"All comparisons halt in some part."—BARCLAY.

*On the sense in which Robt. Barclay uses the term Vehiculum Dei.*

Prop. 5 and 6,—XI. Sec.—"First, that God, who out of his infinite love, sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world, who tasted death for every man, hath given to *every man* a certain day or time of visitation; during which it is possible for them to be saved, and to partake of the fruit of Christ's death.

"Secondly.—That for this end, God hath communicated and given unto every man, a measure of the light of his own Son, a measure of Grace, or a measure of the spirit which the scripture expresses by several names, as sometimes of the seed of the kingdom, Matt. xiii. 18, 22. The light that makes all things manifest, Eph. v. 13. The word of God, Rom. x. 17, a manifestation of the Spirit given to profit withal, 1 Cor. xii. 7. A talent, Matt. xxv. 15. The Gospel preached in every creature, Col. i. 23.

"Thirdly.—That God, in and by this light and seed, invites, calls, exhorts, and strives with every man, in order to save him; which, as it is received, and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of the death and sufferings of Christ, and of Adam's fall; both by bringing them to a sense of their own misery, and to be sharers of the \*sufferings of Christ inwardly, and by making them partakers of his resurrection, in becoming holy, pure, and righteous, and recovered out of their sins. By which also, are saved, they who have the knowledge of Christ outwardly, in that it opens their understanding, rightly to use and apply the things delivered in the scriptures, and to receive the saving use of them; but *that this may be resisted and rejected in both, in which then God is said to be resisted and †pressed down, and Christ to be ‖again crucified, and put to open shame, in and among men.*

"This doctrine, if well weighed, will be found to be the foundation of Christianity, Salvation, and Assurance. It magnifies and commends the merits and death of Christ, in that it not only accounts them sufficient to save all, but declares them to be brought so nigh unto all, as thereby to be put into the nearest capacity of salvation.

\* 2. Cor. i. 5, 4, 10. Col. i. 2, 4. Acts ix. 4. Google  
 † Rom. vi. 4. Phil. iii. 10. ‡ Amos ii. 13. § Heb. vi. 6.



"It exalts, above all, the Grace of God, to which it attributeth all good, even the least and smallest actions, that are so; ascribing thereunto, not only the first beginnings and motions of good, but also the whole conversion and salvation of the soul.

"It wholly excludes the natural man from having any place or portion in his own salvation, by any acting, moving, or working of his own, until he be first quickened, raised up, and actuated by God's Spirit.

Sec. XIII.—"By this Seed, Grace, and Word of God, and Light, wherewith, we say, every one is enlightened, and hath a measure of it, which strives with him, in order to save him, and which may, by the stubbornness and wickedness of man's will, be quenched, bruised, wounded, pressed down, slain, and crucified. We understand not the proper essence and nature of God, precisely taken; which is not divisible into parts and measures, as being a most pure, simple being, void of all composition or division, and therefore can neither be resisted, hurt, wounded, crucified, or slain, by all the efforts and strength of men; *but we understand a spiritual, heavenly, and an invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells*; a measure of which divine and glorious life, is in all men as a seed,\* which of its own nature, draws invites and inclines to God: and this some call Vehiculum Dei, or the spiritual body of Christ, the flesh and blood of Christ which came down from heaven, of which all the saints do †feed, and are thereby nourished unto eternal life. And as every unrighteous action is witnessed against and reprov'd, by this ‡Light and Seed, so by such actions it is hurt, wounded, and slain, and flees from them even as the flesh of man flees from that which is of a contrary nature to it. Now because it is never ||separated from God nor Christ, but wherever it is, God and Christ are wrapped up therein, therefore, and in that respect, as it is resisted, God is said to be resisted; and where it is borne down, God is said to be §pressed as a cart under sheaves, and Christ is said to be slain and crucified. And on the contrary, as this seed is received in the heart, and suffered to bring forth its natural and proper effect, Christ comes to be ¶formed and \*\*raised, of which the scripture makes so much mention, calling it the new man, Christ within, the hope of glory. This is that Christ within which we are heard so much to speak and declare of, everywhere preaching

\* Luke viii. 11. 1 Peter i. 2, 3. 1 John iii. 9. Gal. iii. 16.

+ John vi. 56.

‡ John iii. 20.

|| John i. 5. John i. 4.

§ Amos ii. 13.

¶ Gal. iv. 19.

\*\* Col. ii. 12.

him up, and exhorting people to believe in the light, and obey it, that they may come to know Christ in them, to deliver them from all sin.

“ But by this, as we do not at all intend to equal ourselves to that holy man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, so neither do we destroy the reality of his present existence, as some have falsely calumniated us. For though we affirm that Christ dwells in us, yet not immediately, but mediately, as he is in that seed, which is in us ; whereas He, to wit the Eternal Word, which was with God, and was God, dwelt immediately in that holy man. He then is as the head, and we as the members ; he the vine, and we the branches. Now as the soul of man dwells otherwise, and in a far more immediate manner, in the head, and in the heart, than in the hands or legs ; and as the sap, virtue, and life of the vine lodgeth far otherwise in the stock and root, than in the branches, so God dwelleth otherwise in the man Christ Jesus, than in us.

XIV.—“ We understand not this Seed, Light, or Grace, to be an \*accident, as most men ignorantly do, but a real spiritual substance. We know it to be a †substance, because it subsists in the hearts of wicked men, which many times lies in man’s heart, as the naked grain in the stony ground.

XV.—“ We do not hereby intend any ways to lessen or derogate from the atonement and sacrifice of Jesus Christ ; but on the contrary do magnify and exalt it.

“ We firmly believe that it was necessary that Christ should come, that by his death and sufferings he might offer up himself a sacrifice to God, for our sins, who, his ownself, bare our sins, in his own body, on the tree ; so we believe that the remission of sins, which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise.

“ The history is profitable and comfortable, with the mystery, and never without it ; but the mystery is and may be profitable, without the explicit and outward knowledge of the history.

“ This brings us to another question, to wit, whether Christ be in all men or no ? which we assert. We have said before, how that a divine spiritual, and supernatural Light, or Seed, is Vehiculum Dei ; how that God and Christ dwelleth in it, and is never separated from it ; and also how that, as it is received and closed with, in the heart, Christ comes to be

\* R. B. explains his meaning at length in his 14th sec.

† Being, something existing.—WALKER.

formed and brought forth; but we are far from ever having said, that Christ is thus formed in all men, or in the wicked; for that is a great attainment which the Apostle travailed that it might be brought forth in the Galatians. Neither is Christ in all men by way of union, or indeed to speak strictly, by way of inhabitation; because this inhabitation, as it is generally taken, imports union, or the manner of Christ's being in the Saints; as it is written, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them,' (2 Cor. vi. 16). But in regard Christ is in all men, as a seed, yea, and that he never is, nor can be separated from that holy pure seed and light (John i. 9) which is in all men, therefore may it be said, in a larger sense, that he is in all. He that now lies, as it were slain and buried in them, may come to be raised, and have dominion in their hearts over all (1 Cor. ii. 2). Christ crucified in them, (as the Greek hath it.) This Jesus Christ, was that which the Apostle desired to know in them, and make known unto them, that they might come to be sensible how they had thus been crucifying Christ, that so they might repent and be saved.

"And forasmuch as Christ is called that light that enlightens every man, the light of the world, therefore, the light is taken for Christ, who truly is the fountain of light, and hath his habitation in it, for ever. Thus the light of Christ is sometimes called Christ, i. e. that in which Christ is, and from which he is never separated.

XVI. Sec.—"It will manifestly appear by what is above said, that we understand not this divine principle, to be any part of man's nature, nor yet to be any relics of any good which Adam lost by his fall, in that we make it a distinct separate thing from man's soul, and all the faculties of it, yet such is the malice of our adversaries, that they cease not sometimes, to calumniate us, as if we preached up a natural light, or the light of man's natural conscience. God hath given man the light of his Son, a spiritual divine light, to rule him in things spiritual, and the light of reason, to rule him in things natural. And even as the moon borrows her light from the sun, so ought men, if they would be rightly and comfortably ordered in natural things, to have their reason enlightened by this divine and pure light. Which enlightened reason, in those that obey and follow this true light, we confess may be useful to man, even in spiritual things; as it is still subservient and subject to the other; even as the animal life in man, regulated and ordered by his reason, helps him in going about things that are rational. We do further rightly distinguish this, from man's natural conscience; for conscience

being that in man which ariseth from the natural faculties of man's soul, may be defiled and corrupted. It is said expressly of the impure (Tit. i. 15), that even their mind and conscience is defiled; but this light can never be corrupted nor defiled; neither did it ever consent to evil or wickedness in any; for it is said expressly, that it makes all things manifest that are reproveable (Eph. v. 13); and so is a faithful witness for God, against every unrighteousness in man. 'Now conscience, to define it truly, comes from *conscire*, and is that knowledge which ariseth in man's heart, from what agreeth, contradicteth, or is contrary to anything believed by him, whereby he becomes conscious to himself, that he transgresseth, by doing that which he is persuaded he ought not to do.' So that the mind, being once blinded or defiled with a wrong belief, there ariseth a conscience from that belief, which troubles him, when he goes against it. As for example:—A Turk, who hath possessed himself with a false belief, that it is unlawful for him to drink wine, if he do it, his conscience smites him for it; but though he keeps many concubines, his conscience troubles him not, because his judgment is already defiled with a false opinion, that it is lawful for him to do the one, and unlawful to do the other.

"Whereas, if the light of Christ, in him, were minded, it would reprove him, not only for committing fornication, but also as he became obedient thereunto, that Mahomet was an impostor; as well as Socrates was informed by it, in his day, of the falsity of the heathen gods. So if a Papist eat flesh in Lent, or be not diligent enough in the adoration of saints and images, or if he should condemn images, his conscience would smite him for it, because his judgment is already blinded with a false belief concerning these things:—Whereas the light of Christ never consented to any of those abominations. Thus, then, man's natural conscience is sufficiently distinguished from it; *for conscience followeth the judgment, doth not inform it*; but this light, as it is received, removes the blindness of the judgment, opens the understanding, and rectifies both the judgment and conscience.

"To the light of Christ, then, in the conscience, and not to man's natural conscience, it is that we continually commend men; this, not that, is it which we preach up, and direct people to, as to a most certain guide unto life eternal.

"This Light and Seed of God in man, he cannot move and stir up when he pleaseth, but it moves, blows, and strives with man, as the Lord seeth meet. For though there be a possibility of salvation to every man during the day of his visita-

tion, yet cannot a man, at any time when he pleaseth, or hath some sense of his *misery*, stir up that Light and Grace, so as to procure to himself tenderness of heart; but he must wait for it, which comes upon all at certain times or seasons, wherein it works powerfully upon the soul, mightily tenders it, and breaks it; at which time, if man resists it not, but closes with it, he comes to know salvation by it. In him that is saved the working is of the grace, not of the man, and it is a passiveness rather than an act? though afterwards, as man is wrought upon, there is a will raised in him, by which he comes to be a co-worker with the grace. The first step is, not by man's working—but by his not contrary working. The wickedest men at times are made sensible of their misery by God's visitation, and not only so, but (He) lays hold of them, and gives them a pull, in order to lift them out of their misery, which if they resist not will save them; only they may resist it."

R. Barclay concludes that God hath given to every man a measure of saving sufficient and supernatural light and grace from John\* i.9. "‘That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.’ The life that is in Christ the Word is the light of men. The light shineth in the darkness. He is therefore the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. ‘John came for a witness to bear witness to the light, that all men through† it might believe.’ This light shineth in darkness—that having dispelled the darkness it may produce and beget faith. Moreover, the Evangelist is holding out to us here the office of Christ as mediator, and the benefits which from him, as such, do redound unto us. That which is given, that all men through it may believe, must needs be saving and sufficient; that by walking in which, fellowship with the saints, and the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin, is possessed, must be sufficient.—But such is the light."

In the foregoing quotations from R. Barclay's 5th and 6th propositions, I have endeavoured to give a condensed view of his doctrine, by exhibiting the important points in close connexion with each other; by which it will be seen, that he most distinctly acknowledges the lost and helpless condition of man in the fall; the propitiatory offering of the Lord Jesus

\* Some have called in question our common translation of this text; of it William Penn says, "All the versions I have ever met with, and I have seen more than twenty, render the verse as it is in our English translations."

† See Barclay, Section XXI., for this rendering. Google.

Christ, through the efficacy of which we are placed in a capacity for salvation ; and that the remission of sins, which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise.

Some have objected to the frequent use which Friends have made of the term "principle," in their writings on experimental religion, and Robert Barclay especially, has been charged with asserting a belief in a fourth manifestation of Deity—in the manner by which he expresses himself about the Seed, or Word of Divine Grace, and by the use of the term *Vehiculum Dei*. I do not consider myself competent to the thorough investigation of this question—but as the English word "principle" appears to mean "original or operative cause"—or "being, productive of other being ;" it does not, to me, appear to be used improperly, when it has reference to the manifestation of Christ in the soul. It does not make Christ *only* a principle, as some of our opponents have asserted—Friends have ever acknowledged and believed in him, in his manifestation in the flesh, as a Divine person, as well as in his spiritual appearance in the heart : whereby he powerfully operates upon it, by the influences of his Holy Spirit, for its regeneration and purification.

Our Lord repeatedly uses this metaphor of the Seed, to denote both how the influences or convictions of his Holy Spirit may be quenched or rendered unproductive, even as the Seed in barren ground—and, also, to denote its fruitful and wonderfully expansive power, when its secret influence is yielded to, and cherished in the heart ; by which His kingdom or dominion becomes established there.

R. B. uses the term *Vehiculum Dei*, (which he justifies by a reference to a passage in the Song of Solomon,) meaning the medium through which God operates upon the mind and heart. We read in the scriptures that God is light—that Christ is the light of the world. He is, therefore, manifested in the heart of man, through the medium of his own light—the element, if we may so speak, in which he dwells.

In like manner, it is said, "God is love." He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Love is, therefore, the element, as it were, through which the light of his gracious countenance beams forth upon the contrite and obedient soul.

I have no doubt but that had R. B. foreseen how this term might be misconstrued, he would not have used it. The Apology was first written in Latin, and for the learned—but George Whitehead observes that it was not a term used by

**Friends.** See his treatise of the Divine Light of Christ in Man. R. B. himself would freely have rejected any term which bore an unscriptural meaning—therefore we, in this day, are under no obligation to receive this, if it can be fairly proved to be so; but of this I have some doubts: but let us not seek to “make a man an offender for a word,” seeing it is perfectly obvious that he had no idea of any fourth manifestation of the Deity—as has been most unfairly inferred.

Our early friends, taking their ideas and language from the scripture, make a free use of the figures of speech, and various instructive comparisons which they found there. Robt. Barclay remarks, “That all comparisons halt in some part.” They are, nevertheless, useful by way of illustration, when speaking or writing upon spiritual subjects, but must not be construed too rigidly—spiritual things can only in part be explained by corporeal ideas, and yet such ideas are of some service in opening the understanding.

The reader—bearing these remarks in mind—is particularly requested to examine for himself the references to scripture, given in the foregoing pages. He will then see how the verity of the doctrines held by R. Barclay and the early Friends, as well as the ideas and terms by which they express or illustrate them, is supported by the authority of Holy Scripture; and very generally he will find the application of texts quoted particularly appropriate, and he himself will be instructed by the research.

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## ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

William Penn declares, “we both love, honour, and prefer them before all books in the world; ever choosing to express our belief of the Christian faith and doctrine in the terms thereof; and rejecting all principles and doctrines whatsoever, that are repugnant thereunto.”—Vol. v. page 337.

“We waive not—we suppress not; but heartily embrace and profess before the whole world, all points of Christian doctrine according to the mind of the Holy Ghost, as I have amply signified before upon this subject.”—Page 428.

“We believe the Scriptures to be the declaration of the mind of the Holy Ghost; therefore not superior to the Holy Ghost.”—Page 422. “All the best Reformers and Martyrs (of whom he gives a list) concur in our assertion and testimony, that the double and agreeing testimony of the Spirit of

God within, and the Scriptures of Truth without is the rule and judge of faith, doctrine, and practice.”\*—Page 423.

“I say, then, that where we are supposed to differ most we differ least; and where we are believed to differ least, we most of all differ, which I explain thus:—It is generally thought that we do not hold the common doctrines of Christianity, but have introduced new and erroneous ones in lieu thereof; whereas we plainly and entirely believe the Truths contained in the Creed, that is commonly called the Apostles, which is very comprehensive, as well as very ancient.”—He then instances wherein we do differ.—Page 418.

Robert Barclay says—“that in the Scriptures is a sufficient clear testimony to all the essentials of the Christian faith. We do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians; and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary to their testimony may therefore justly be rejected as false.” “That whatsoever any do contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the Devil.”

Richard Claridge, in his Treatise on the Scriptures, calls them the Authentical Records of the Church. He acknowledges they were given by Inspiration of God. That they do contain a clear and sufficient declaration of all doctrines in common to be believed in order to eternal life and salvation. And that they are the best outward rule and standard of doctrine and practice. That whatsoever either doctrine or practice, though under pretensions to the immediate dictates and teaching of the Spirit, is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, ought to be rejected and disowned as false and erroneous. For whatsoever is not read therein, or may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith. That the Holy Scriptures

\* An eminent writer, on the “Evidence of the Christian Religion,” makes that approach to our doctrine of the Inward Light that I incline to give a short extract. After declaring God to be the Author of the Law of Conscience—he says, “Each entire man has a conscience within his breast which tells him the difference between right and wrong, and tells him somewhat of the God who planted it there; and each has a consciousness which tells him of his own delinquencies against this law of moral nature, and that in the eye of him that ordained that law he himself is an offender. Let the word (scriptures), which tells him the same thing, lay hold of his attention, and the recognized harmony between the lessons of the one and of the other—the *felt* echo in his own heart, to the intimations of a message thus brought nigh unto him; the response given from within, to the voice heard from without—will fix and perpetuate his attention the more; and all the discoveries made by this joint or double manifestation will have at least the authority of two witnesses to confirm them.”—*Dr. Chalmers, Vol. II., page 171.*



contain the sayings or words of God : are Divine writings which claim the precedence of all others ; and we do esteem them as such ourselves, and under this character recommend them to others. That there ever was a most sweet concord and harmony between the teachings of the Spirit and the Testimony of the Holy Scripture ; and that there is no inconsistency or contradiction between the one and the other.—That as the Holy Scriptures have God alone for their author, so the Spirit of God alone is their certain and infallible Interpreter.”

In conclusion : may we all, my dear Friends and Fellow-Professors, earnestly endeavour, in these times of agitation and of conflict, to keep cool and calm in our spirits, cleaving close to the Lord in uprightness of heart—waiting frequently and reverently upon Him ; pouring forth the breathings of our spirits at his footstool, in living faith in the Captain of our Salvation, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. May we not hope that in his adorable mercy, as we trust in Him, he will be graciously pleased to sustain us ~~through these~~ permitted trials, *a people to His praise* ; and enable us to love even those who, in despitefully using us, think they “are doing God service.” May we cherish desires for their recovery from such a dangerous delusion, praying for their present and eternal well-being. They have indeed grieved and wounded our spirits—but let us remember, that we ourselves have the same subtle enemies to watch against, which, we apprehend, have deceived them.

Thus, as we walk in the light—that sorely reviled but most precious “Inward Light,” wherewith Christ our Redeemer enlighteneth us, we shall know a fellowship with the Father and with the Son—and under the precious influences of the Holy Spirit, with the true children of God, and ministers of Christ : yea, we shall be led to hold in sweet remembrance such men as George Fox, William Penn, Isaac Penington, and Robert Barclay—men who counted nothing too dear to part with, that they might win Christ, and be found in Him—men who successfully laboured to turn many to righteousness—whom, we reverently believe, are mingling with the spirits of the just already made perfect, and shall shine as the stars for ever and ever, in the firmament of God’s glory.

THE END.







